



**Testimony in support of HB 5653 – An Act Concerning
Chemicals of High Concern For Children**

February 5, 2015
Children's Committee

Good Afternoon Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, and members of the Children's Committee. My name is Beth Beisel, and I am here on behalf of CT Families Against Chemical Trespass (ConnFACT), the organization which grew from the roots of GMO Free CT. We strongly support HB 5653, An Act Concerning Chemicals of High Concern to Children. ConnFACT is a grassroots organization working to educate the public about chemical trespass, we believe that everyone has the right to live in an environment free of toxic chemicals that are currently in the air we breath, the water we drink, and the food we eat. We also believe that information is power and that parents have a right to know what chemicals are in the products their children are using.

HB 5653 is such a simple request. It is difficult to understand why this bill has not passed in prior years. We are not asking that these chemicals of high concern be banned from children's products. We are simply asking that the Commissioner of Public Health identify which chemicals are possibly harmful to children so that parents can make informed decisions.

On a personal note, I would like to share an experience with you that is on my mind every day. Four years ago, we bought a new couch for our family room. We all sit and lie on that couch, filled with flame retardants and other chemicals, every single day. When we were ordering the couch, the furniture sales person suggested we purchase stain protection for it, since we have a dog. At the time it sounded like a smart choice, because we had no idea that chemicals in the stain guard were potentially hazardous to our health. (1,2,3,4)

Had we known, we never would have agreed to the application of such products on a piece of furniture that is used every day by our entire family, including our dog! The furniture store is now out of business, and we have to live with that couch, knowing that it could very well be harming us, and the effects will not be known for years.

The cumulative effect of chemicals we are now exposed to daily may not be known for many years to come. We would have made different decisions if we had the information to make informed choices for our family. It is critical that we take precautions to protect future generations from exposure to toxic chemicals. Young children are our most vulnerable citizens because of their size. Parents have a right to know what chemicals are in the products their children are playing with, living in and using daily. By giving parents information, they can make

informed decisions, without information parents have lost the right to make the best choices for their family. One has to question what the companies making these products are trying to hide. Thank you very much for your efforts on behalf of all our children.

- 1) <http://www.ewg.org/guides/cleaners/5571-ScotchGardby3MFabricUpholsteryProtectorSpray>
- 2) <http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/news/2014/jan/bay-seals-and-pfos>
- 3) <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/cancer-linked-flame/>
- 4) <http://www.cleanhealthyny.org/#!chemicals-in-couches/cc4x>